GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1907
ANSWERED ON:12.03.2008
CHANGES IN HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANTS PROGRAMME BY U.K.
Deora Shri Milind Murli;Fanthome Shri Francis;Manoj Dr. K.S.;Surendran Shri Chengara;Vallabbhaneni Shri Balashowry

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any information that U.K. has introduced certain changes in highly skilled migrants programme which prevents Indian doctors /migrants from specialized training programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Indian Government has taken up the matter with the Government of U.K. in this regard; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b): The UK Government has revised the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP) as part of UK Government's Five-Year Strategy for Asylum and Immigration published in 2005 to streamline more than 80 existing routes of entry into the UK. The new Point Based System (PBS) will streamline the existing routes into 5 broad tiers to facilitate entry for all those coming to work or study by making selection criterion (qualification, age, previous earnings etc.) more objective and transparent. Each of the 5 tiers will have different conditions, entitlements and entry clearance checks.

The UK Prime Minister has launched the first stage of the new PBS from Feb. 29, 2008. All highly skilled foreign nationals currently working in the UK who wish to extend their stay need to apply under the new system. PBS Tier I will replace the HSMP.This tier, which will be opened to any highly skilled worker with sufficient points, will be implemented in India from April 1, 2008. The changes envisaged in the immigration rules falls under UK's domestic law.

(c): The matter has been taken up by the Government and the High Commission of India in London with concerned UK authorities from time to time including at the time of visit of Gordon Brown, UK's the then Chancellor of the Exchequer from 17-18 January, 2007 and UK Prime Minister's visit to India in January, 2008.

(d): The Joint Statement signed by the two Prime Ministers at the conclusion of the India-UK Summit on January 21, 2008 noted the importance of facilitating movement of professionals across a broad range of sectors of interest to both sides.